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Column Number 5

THE DATING SEASON

I have recently returned from a tour of 950,000 American colleges where I made a survey of undergraduate dating customs and sold mechanical dogs, and I have tabulated my findings and I am now prepared to tell you the simple secret of successful dating.

The simple secret is simply this: a date is successful when the man knows how to treat the girl.

And how does a girl like to be treated? If you want to know, read and remember these four cardinal rules of dating:

1. A girl likes to be treated with respect.

When you call for your girl, do not drive up in front of the sorority house and yell, "Hey, fat lady!" Get out of your car. Walk respectfully to the door. Knock respectfully. When your girl comes out, tug your forelock and say respectfully, "Good evening, your honor." Then offer her a Marlboro, for what greater respect can you show your girl than to offer Marlboro with its fine flavor and exclusive selectrate filter? It will indicate immediately that you respect her taste, respect her discernment, respect her intelligence. So, good buddies, before going out on a date, always remember to buy some Marlboros, available in soft pack or flip-top box in all 50 of the United States and also Cleveland.

2. A girl likes a good listener.

Do not monopolize the conversation. Let her talk while you listen attentively. Make sure, however, that she is not herself a good listener. I recollect a date I had once with a coed named Greensleeves Signfoos, a lovely girl, but unfortunately a listener, not a talker. I too was a listener so we just sat all night long, each with his hand cupped over his ear, straining to catch a word, not talking hour after hour until finally a policeman came by and arrested us both for vagrancy. I did a year and a day. She got by with a suspended sentence because she was the sole support of her aged housemother.

3. A girl likes to be taken to nice places.

By "nice" places I do not mean expensive places. A girl does not demand luxury. All she asks is a place that is pleasant and gracious. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, for example. Or Mount Rushmore. Or the Taj Mahal. Or the Bureau of Weights and Measures. Find places like these to take your girl. In no circumstances must you take her to an oil-cracking plant.

4. A girl likes a man to be well-informed.

Come prepared with a few interesting facts that you can drop casually into the conversation. Like this: "Did you know, Snookiepuss, that when cattle, sheep, camels, goats, antelopes, and other members of the cud-chewing family get up, they always get up hind legs first?" Or this: "Are you aware, Hotlips, that corn grows faster at night?" Or this: "By the way, Loverhead, Oslo did not become the capital of Norway till July 11, 1924."

"A girl likes to be taken to nice places"

If you can slip enough of these nuggets into the conversation before dinner, your date will grow too torpid to eat. Some men save up to a half million dollars a year this way.

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To the list of things girls like, add the king-size, unfiltered Philip Morris Commander. Girls, men—in fact everybody with a taste bud in his head—likes mild, natural Commander, co-sponsors with Marlboro of this column.

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